

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05

NSCE-00 /048 W
----- 005233

O R 271340Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8645
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
USIA WASHDC

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STATE FOR CU/ARTS, INFO: CU/EE, EUR/SOV; GENEVA FOR CSCE/
CORIDEN; LENINGRAD FOR P&C; VUSIA FOR IEE

E. O. 11652: NA
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SUBJ: CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS (CU/ARTS): DRAMA GROUP FOR 1975

REF: (A) STATE 62306 (B) MOSCOW 2940

1. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED WITH APPRECIATION TEXT OF PLAYS
UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION FOR A.C. T. TOUR. WE
FURTHER REQUEST THREE COPIES OF ACTING TEXTS OF FINAL TWO
PLAYS WHEN DECIDED UPON FOR EARLY TRANSLATION INTO
RUSSIAN TO FACILITATE TRANSLATION. CARGE I.D. #37-UR-75-
0281.

2. HAVING READ "MATCHMAKER," EMBASSY STRONGLY RECOMMENDS
THIS PLAY NOT RPT NOT BE INCLUDED IN TOP TWO PLAYS FOR
SOVIET TOUR. BELIEVE SOVIET AUDIENCES WOULD NOT RELATE
TO SHOPKEEPER MILIEU OF 1880'S, THAT DATED FLAVOR OF
PLAY WOULD FURTHER ACCENTUATE ABSENCE OF CONTEMPORARY
PLAY FROM PROGRAM, AND THE SECOND PLAY BY WILDER AMONG
FOUR BROUGHT TO USSR BY EXCHANGE PROGRAM WOULD SEEM
OUR OF PROPORTION WITHOUT VERY STRONG JUSTIFICATION,
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SINCE "MATCHMAKER" NOT AMONG WILDER'S STRONGEST PLAYS.

3. EMBASSY IN MEANTIME INFORMED GOSKONTSERT/MINCULT/MFA
BY LETTER OF DEPARTMENT'S FORMAL NOMINATION OF A.C.T.
FOR FOUR-WEEK TOUR DURING TIME PERIOD IN REFTEL (A).
OTHER RELEVANT DETAILS IN REFTEL INCLUDED IN THIS LETTER.
LETTER ALSO STATED QUOTE THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATRE
IS PREPARED TO PRESENT PERFORMANCES OF O'NEILL'S "DESIRE
UNDER THE ELMS" AND ONE OTHER AMERICAN PLAY UNQUOTE.

4. EMBASSY CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT CONTEMPORARY PLAY
VITAL FOR TOUR AND SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN FINAL PAIR OF
PLAYS, AND WE RECOMMEND DEPT/ACT CONTINUE EXPLORE SUITABLE
CONTEMPORARY PLAYS. RE PARA. 10, REFTEL (A): WE BELIEVE
THERE IS SOMETHING VERY POSTIVE ABOUT PRESENTING IN THE
USSR AT THIS TIME AN HONEST AMERICAN PLAY ABOUT CONTEMPORARY
ISSUES (SO LONG AS PLAY IS ALSO HIGH-QUALITY THEATER OF
COURSE). AMONG
THINKING PEOPLE IN CULTURAL WORLD HERE TO WHOM WE TALK
REGULARLY (MANY OF WHOM ARE DEVOTED LISTENERS TO VOICE OF
AMERICA), THERE IS GREAT RESPECT FOR THE STRENGTH IN
AMERICAN SOCIETY WHICH ALLOWS IT TO CRITICIZE,
EXAMINE AND RENEW ITSELF. THIS FEATURE OF AMERICAN
SOCIETY SETS AN EXAMPLE FOR THOSE WHO ASPIRE TO MORE
OF THIS QUALITY IN THEIR OWN SOCIETY.

5. IF DEPARTMENT DECIDES IT IMPOSSIBLE FIND SUITABLE
CONTEMPORARY PLAY, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS "TIME OF YOUR
LIFE" AS SECOND PLAY.

6. GOSKONTSERT (NETTO) INITIAL REACTION TO DRAMA GROUP
PROPOSAL WAS THAT TIME WAS SHORT, BUT THEY WILLING EXPLORE
ALL ASPECTS OF TOUR ASAP. ADVANCE VISIT AS EARLY AS
APRIL TWELVE DID NOT RPT NOT APPEAR REALISTIC TO GOSKONTSERT
IN INITIAL DISCUSSION.

7. AT MARCH TWENTY-FIVE MEETING WITH BURROVA, P&C
COUNSELOR STRESSED DESIRE OF DEPARTMENT AND ACT THAT
ADVANCE VISIT FOR THEATER TOUR TAKE PLACE AS REQUESTED
APRIL TWELVE - NINETEEN. MIN CULT SAID SEPTEMBER TOUR,
AND CONSEQUENTLY APRIL ADVANCE VISIT, WILL BE DIFFICULT
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TO SCHEDULE, BECAUSE SEPTEMBER IS MONTH WHEN SOVIET
THEATERS BEGIN REGULAR SEASON. FYI WHEN THE POSSIBILITY
OF A THEATER PAG CAME UP SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, GOSKONTSERT
DID NOT IDENTIFY SEPTEMBER AS DIFFICULT MONTH FOR SCHEDUL-
ING PERFORMANCES END FYI.

8. ANOTHER PROBLEM MIN CULT SEES BLOCKING WAY TO
AGREEMENT ON DATES OF ACT ADVANCE VISIT IS CHOICE OF

SECOND PLAY. EMBOFF REPLIED WE WOULD BE ABLE TO NAME SECOND PLAY WITHIN TEN DAYS, BUT IN MEANTIME WE NEED AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON SCHEDULING ADVANCE TOUR, WHICH DOES NOT REQUIRE NAMES OF PLAYS. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT ACT MUST HIRE ACTORS AND BEGIN REHEARSALS AND OTHERWISE PROCEED WITH PREPARATIONS SO SECOND PLAY WILL BE NAMED VERY SOON AND BOTH WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING IN MID-SUMMER. ASSURANCE WAS RELUCTANTLY GIVEN BY BUTROVA THAT CHOICE OF SECOND PLAY COULD BE APPROVED AFTER READING SCRIPT ("DESIRE" PRESENTS NO PROBLEM), BUT BOTH PLAYS WOULD HAVE TO BE SEEN.

9. BUTROVA PLEASED WITH CHOICE OF "DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS" AND MENTIONED " WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE" IN LATE FORTIES BY FAMOUS SOVIET ACTRESS (KONAN -- SPELLING UNCERTAIN) IN KAMERNIY THEATER. MAJOR CLASSICAL DRAMA THEATER (MXAT) ALSO PLANNING PRODUCTION FOR NEXT SEASON.

STOESSEL

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